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THE FORTUNATE ISLES.

You sail and you seek for the Fortunate Isles.
The old Greek Isles of the yellow bird's song?
Then steer straight on through the watery miles.
Straight on, straight on, and you can't go wrong.
Nay, not to the left; nay, not to the right;
But on, straight on, and the Isles are in sight.
The Fortunate Isles, where the yellow birds sing
And life lies girt with a golden ring.
These Fortunate Isles, they are not far;
They lie within reach of the lowliest door;
You can see them by the twilight star;
You can hear them sing by the moon's white shore.
Nay, never look back! Those levelled gravestones
They were landing steps; they were steps unto thrones
Of glory for souls that have sailed before
And have set white feet on the Fortunate shore.
And what are the names of the Fortunate Isles?
Why, Duty and Love and a large Content,
Lo! these are the Isles of the watery miles
That God let down from the firmament.
Lo! Duty and Love, and a true man's trust;
Your forehead to God and your feet in the dust;
Lo! Duty and Love and a sweet babe's smiles,
And there, O friend, are the Fortunate Isles.
—By Joaquin Miller.

A RESULT OF FIRMNESS

THE government bureau of war risk insurance has announced another reduction in marine insurance rates between ports of the United States and non-belligerent ports of the western hemisphere. All told the government action is said to have worked a reduction of 80 per cent in our war insurance against present dangers.

These favorable results are due of course to increased respect for American rights on the part of the belligerent nations. Europe has learned that Uncle Sam is wide awake when American interests are assailed. We have told Germany, England and Austria "where to head in" to use the vernacular, and they have given heed.

FOR ORCHARD EFFICIENCY

AT the Winter Short Course to be held at the agricultural college from Jan. 10 to February 4 unusual attention is to be given the subject of horticulture. An effort is being made to make the instruction meet present day needs and to this end the problems considered will deal with orchard maintenance and fertility rather than with planting which was the great live topic in the state a few years ago.

The practice of attending these short course lectures is quite generally followed on the part of progressive western Oregon growers. There are large orchard concerns that make a fixed habit of sending representatives to the college expressly for instruction purposes. The opportunity for such benefits is also open to eastern Oregon people and unquestionably good results would follow if more would attend from this section.

ADDITIONAL PRECINCTS NECESSARY

THE creation of new election precincts in the thickly populated portions of the county is to be strongly commended. The action will facilitate voting on election days and the counting of the vote after the polls are closed.

The vote at the recent election in Pendleton proved conclusively our precincts are too large. In several precincts the number of votes cast ran close to 500 whereas it is generally considered there should not be more than 250 voters in a precinct.

It was not hard to handle the voting in the city election because the ballot was short, thus permitting voters to cast their ballots quickly and the judges and clerks to make a rapid count. In a general election with a long ballot it would be physically impossible for so many votes to be cast in precincts so arranged. Furthermore the task of counting the ballots would be something to tax the endurance of the election officials. This was shown at the general election a year ago when it proved a herculean job for some of the boards to canvass the large vote that was cast.

Through the equal suffrage amendment the number of voters in the county has been doubled. It is natural additional voting precincts should become necessary.

CREATING AN INDUSTRY

FOR 22 years, a farmer near Heppner has grown corn with an average yield of 50 bushels.

A homesteader 12 miles west of Shaniko, in one of the driest and coldest districts, grew corn this season that turned off 35 bushels.

Four years of campaign by the Oregon-Washington Railroad company has convinced many farmers that the Inland Empire will produce corn profitably and that the crop will ultimately be regularly produced as one of the basic industries of the region.

A difficulty in the way is that the farms of the region are too large and that the farmers think in terms of wheat. They operate on a large scale and do not want to bother with diversified cropping as would be involved, for instance, in growing corn and feeding it to livestock. It has been said that the operations of these big farms in one-crop production will never be broken up until the soil is broken down. That, of course will ultimately come to pass with wheat as the only crop.

This year, the first silo was built, and the first corn put up for ensilage. Next year, at least a dozen more silos will be constructed. There is no better proof that the railroad's campaign for corn growing is yielding results. That the inauguration of such a movement among the farmers on any considerable scale will be of inestimable value to themselves and to the region is undoubted.

The campaign has proven that corn can be successfully and profitably produced in practically every kind of district in the Inland Empire where production is at all possible. The Shaniko homesteader grew his corn on land at an elevation of 3400 feet.

The railroad company is rendering a high service in its corn-growing activity.—Portland Journal.

CURRENT THINKING

MOUNT ARARAT.

"Mount Ararat, where there has hardly been a moment's peace since Noah and his Ark grounded upon its massive shoulder, is at present the huge boundary mark between the Ottoman empire and Russia, and under the shadows of the historic peak the fighting lines of Osmanli and Russian have been away back and forth, never far beyond the line of the frontier," begins a bulletin issued by the National Geographic Society. "Ararat is the hub of Armenia, of the original home of the Hittite people. It is also the center of what has ever been the most troubled area on earth. Tribes of Europe and of Asia have fought each other here from the dawn of history, and the remnants from the battles have settled as neighbors, hating, despoiling, massacring one another. "Ararat is one of the most impres-

How Comptroller Makes Good

(From the Atlanta Constitution.)
The extent of usury among the country town national banks of the United States, which the treasury department, through the comptroller of the currency, is endeavoring to correct, has reached more amazing proportions, according to an additional statement just issued by Comptroller of the Currency John Skelton Williams, than the public has heretofore had any idea of.

Mr. Williams has, in former statements, sought to make it clear that generally speaking the big banks, the city banks and those operating in close touch with harmony with the city institutions have no part or share in this violation of state and national law which has shocked and outraged every sense of financial fairness and decency. The constitution, too, in commenting upon the disclosures of these excessive usurious practices, has sought always to let no part of the burden rest unjustly upon the well-directed city and town banks.

The new disclosures, or at least a startling elaboration of those already made, come in the shape of a reply by Comptroller Williams to criticisms made by the executive committee of the national bank section of the American Bankers' association. In these criticisms the committee declared that in its opinion the usurious practices complained of "are confined only to some sections of the country and are not general," that the comptroller's statements had created a bad impression and done great injustice to the large majority of bankers and requested him to modify and correct them.

The committee's criticisms invite the more serious indictment contained in the comptroller's reply published today, in which he shows that 2743 national banks, or more than one-third of the total number in the United States, "were charging on some of their loans 10 per cent per annum or more—in hundreds of banks very much more." Comptroller Williams asks:

"When 2743 national banks in 42 states covering 38 per cent of the total area of the continental United States, exclusive of Alaska, admit un-

der oath that they are charging 10 per cent or more on some of their loans, and when 1022 national banks in 25 states, which include 74 per cent of the total area of the continental United States, exclusive of Alaska, also confess that they have been charging on an average anywhere from 10 per cent to 18 per cent or more on all of their loans, is it not flying in the face of facts to suggest that the practice is confined either to a small area or to a few banks?"

It must be a source of disappointment and chagrin to all Georgians who condemn the practice of usurious extortion, to know from the comptroller's statement that sixty-six of the offending national banks which have been in the habit of charging anywhere from 10 to 100 per cent or more on small loans, chiefly to farmers, are located in this state (Georgia).

The subject is one which needs no further comment. It must in all good conscience demand speedy, sweeping and effective remedy; and if there is not sufficient authority under the present laws to bring it about, congress should and must provide a speedy means of relief.

The national authorities, treasury department and congress may be depended upon as quickly as possible to eliminate serious interest extortion from the national banks.

But what are we going to do about the state banks? In similar territory, perhaps in every state of the union, state banks have been equally guilty with those under national supervision—perhaps more so. Nor is there the same restraining law and influence to put an end to usury.

State authorities, state legislatures, must meet this issue if the farmers of this country are to have relief from a burden of oppression from which they have already too long suffered.

If there is not law enough now to stop it, it should be made before another legislative session passes. The city man has his protection in the sense of justice and the law-abiding disposition of the financial institutions with which he deals. The farmer, too, must have his.

Stories From the War Zone

BY ED L. KEEN.
(United Press Staff Correspondent.)

LONDON, Nov. 18.—(By Mail.)—Imagine John D. Rockefeller introducing Bill Haywood to an audience recruited about equally from the realms of the limousine and the push cart.

That's about like the spectacle at which London was amazed the other afternoon when the Duke of Rutland led Ben Tillett to the stage of His Majesty's theater before a thoroughly mixed crowd of "upper" and "lower" class Britishers and launched Ben's lecture on the war.

Rutland—tall, monocled, frock-coated, spotted, with Cambridge accent and Mayfair manner; Tillett—short, stumpy, sack-coated, baggy-trousered, with an East End jaw and a Cockney accent.

The Duke—story of tomes, his family tree rooted in the middle ages, a top-notch of the British landed gentry, and what certain Americans doubtless would term a "malefactor of great wealth."

The Docker—man of the people, day-laborer, England's most belligerent strike leader and, in his own words, an "international social revolutionist"—before the war.

It was a graphic illustration of the leveling effect of war in this country of classes.

Duke and Docker were on the same mission—to impress the British public with its responsibility toward the men at the front.

save of earth's mountains, for it rises sheer to the clouds out of an immense plain.
The dominant mountain is split into two peaks, Great and Little Ararat. Great Ararat rises to a height of 17,000 feet above the level of the sea. Little Ararat, where the boundaries of the Ottoman empire, of Russia and of Persia meet, reaches an altitude of 12,840 feet. Though the snow line is very high here—14,000 feet—the dome of Great Ararat is covered with glittering fields of unbroken white.

"A vast wealth of legend surrounds the mountain, which has always deeply impressed the imaginations of the peoples who have wandered, passed or settled beneath it. The Armenian priests long believed that the wonderful mysteries of its summit might never be surveyed by human eyes, and all thought of scaling Ararat was considered almost in the light of sacrilege.

"The Armenians have also held that they are the first people after the flood, the immediate descendants of Noah, so to speak; for the first village that Noah founded after abandoning the Ark was Nakhichevan. So the Armenian thinks that his people were the first race of men to grow up in the world after the flood.

"The name Ararat means 'high.' The Persian name for the mountain, Koh-i-Nuh, means 'Noah's mountain.' It has been determined by the natives that the Garden of Eden was situated in the valley of the Araxes.
"Noah's wife was buried in this valley near the mountain, and grapes are still grown there whose vines are the direct descendants of vines planted by Noah."

Pope to Proclaim Holy Year.
ROME, Dec. 15.—The Pope intends to consecrate the year in which peace is concluded as a holy year it was said here.

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FEE REPLIES.

(Continued from page one.)

or clerks of election or on any other present. An elector within the meaning of that section is a person clothed with the power to vote in the precinct. The law confers upon the judges, clerks and electors no power to delegate the authority to challenge; they must perform that duty themselves and not by another. Section 3320 providing for persons being present at certain stages of the election, if furnished with proper credentials by a candidate for office, in no manner modifies the preceding section for they are both parts of the same act and must be construed together and meaning and effect given to each part. It follows, the person present with credentials from a candidate or as the representative of a political party must be an elector of the election precinct and as Dudley Evans was not an officer of the law, or any elector, his presence was a violation of the statute.

The election law must be obeyed by the judges as well as by the electors, a departure endangers the validity of the election, but a man cannot violate the law and then take advantage of his own wrong to gain an unconscionable advantage. Therefore, if Evans was illegally at the polls he could not legally challenge a voter and Lowell's offer to turn the cards face up is the trick of a gambler, who has slipped the cut, holds four aces in his hand, one up his sleeve and has another under the edge of the table.

He is a lawyer and yet does not know how to open a ballot box or get into court. He wants someone to assist on both jobs. Why, get an ax, break the lock on the box and chop your way into court; that would be as smooth as the importation of prize fighters to intimidate timid women, many of whom were exercising the right of suffrage for the first time.

I have no doubt Dudley's exposition of the election laws sounded learned to the judge, because he is a like necessity. Until his communication reached me I supposed Montgomery had been imposed upon by designing persons, when Dudley was furnished with credentials, but I am now convinced poor John was a victim of incompetent legal advice.

If Lowell was the legal advisor and directing spirit of the Montgomery campaign, why did he not have confidence in the honesty, ability and intelligence of the people of the city to conduct their own election. Governor Withycombe expressed such confidence in his telegram and he sent no representative here. Lowell knew the people. He had been asking and receiving their support at the polls for 20 years. He must have suddenly concluded he could only reach the senate by a spasm of morality and a pretense that he and his bunch are cleaner, purer and more holy than the rest of the community.

The judge unduly flatters himself when he states he was a member of the inner circle during the recent campaign, for those who engineer its workings are too wise to admit him to membership; only men who don't talk and who obey commands are admitted there. All its actions are characterized by oriental stealth and cunning. Appearance is generally deceptive. It sometimes supports a candidate ostensibly to quietly slip a dagger between his fourth and fifth ribs. Its workings have been more open since the election than before, and it now looks as if Montgomery had gotten the dagger. It is only by indirection at times that we find direction out.

It may be true, Dr. Best received



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